

'Coin World Almanac' keeps getting better

By Roger Boye

Few books in my library show more wear from use than the third edition of the "Coin World Almanac," published in 1977. It's loaded with information on coins and currency, the proverbial one-stop reference that's as helpful as any hobby guidebook.

Last month the Coin World staff finally issued the long over-due fourth edition, proving that even great tomes can be improved. The new 734-page volume wins my vote as coin collection's book of the year.

Fortunately, the editors once again present much of the material in narrative form with a detailed index for quick checking. Sections on gold, silver and coins as investments are delights to read.

The book also pulls together dozens of lists, the longest of which records the "retail values" of all U.S. and Canadian coins in up to six condition categories. The volume also explains in detail how to detect counterfeits and how to order coins by mail, among other things, tips missing from routine price guides.

In the new edition, Coin World editors expanded sub-chapters on grading [determining the condition of a coin] and paper-money errors, but those sections suffer most from the book's major shortcoming: a lack of illustrations. Also, in an effort to reduce costs, the publisher deleted some data reported in the third edition, including useful advice on how to order coins from many foreign governments.

But those flaws are minor. The almanac is an accurate, comprehensive repository of facts, well worth the price. To order a copy, send \$14.95 [for soft-cover edition] or \$25 [for hardbound] to Coin World, P.O. Box 150, Sidney, Ohio 45365. Coin World is a weekly hobby newspaper that marks its 25th anniversary next year.

• The 1985 edition of coin collection's oldest, continuously published reference—"Handbook of United States Coins," by R.S. Yeoman—is now on sale at many hobby and book stores for \$3.95 [soft cover]. The new volume—the 42d—includes a list of U.S. coins and their "wholesale values," the prices dealers might pay when buying keepsakes from collectors.

Copies of the so-called "Blue Book" also are available from the publisher, Western Publishing Co., Inc., P.O. Box 700, Racine, Wis. 53401.

• At least 150 dealers from around the country will be selling coins, stamps and jewelry next week at a show sponsored by Numismatists of Illinois Sales and Exchange.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. next Sunday at the O'Hare Exposition Center, 5600 River Rd., Rosemont. Admission is free.